

The DX Bulletin

ISSUE 186 APRIL 18, 1983

GERMAN EXPEDITION TEAM MISSING IN SOUTH CHINA SEA

ON SUNDAY, APRIL 10, four German amateurs, four additional boat crew members, and their 51-foot sailboat, vanished without a trace near Amboyna Cay, in the South China Sea. The expedition, which left Singapore earlier that week, aimed to activate the DXCC "country" known as "Spratly." Several amateurs in the general area monitored and taped the final radio transmission from the boat, which had come within one nautical mile of Amboyna Cay. Their last words before contact was lost were that they had been fired upon and a fire had broken out aboard the catamaran.

The German team consisted of Gero Band, DJ3NG, Baldur Drobica, DJ6SI, Diethelm Mueller, DJ4EI, and Norbert Willand, DF6FK. Two of the crew members are known to have been owner Peter Marx, and a woman, Jenny Toh.

Amboyna Cay, as well as the main Spratly Island and others in the area, are well-known to be occupied by Vietnamese civilians and military personnel. An official in the Maritime Division of the U.S. Department of State was quoted as saying that a "Maritime Warning" has been in effect in the area for years, and he admitted that this incident will probably cause the Warning to be strengthened.

Owners of the catamaran, based in Singapore, sent a small aircraft to search for the boat on both April 12 and 13, both times coming up with no sign of it. Their overflights

revealed "many people and buildings" on Amboyna Cay, which is about 125 miles ESE of Spratly itself. The owners have requested assistance from the Philippine military to aid the search, possibly using helicopters. Amateurs closest to Amboyna Cay, in Brunei, were at first instructed by their government to say nothing about the incident, and later allowed to transmit, but only official government press releases. The Japanese government and the U.S. Coast Guard contingent on Guam were also notified but their part in the search remains in doubt.

Some West German newspapers were reporting as early as Wednesday, Apr 13, that all aboard the boat were presumed dead, but these reports were unsubstantiated.



(continued next page)

PROPAGATION: Apr 16, Low Normal; Apr 17, High/Low Normal; Apr 18-20, High Normal; Apr 21, Disturbed; Apr 22, Low Normal; Apr 23, High/Above Normal; Apr 24, 25, Below Normal; Apr 26-May 2, Low Normal. May 3,4, Below Normal. (N4XX)

Flux (81)	Flux (82)	Date	Flux (83)	Alpha (83)	K (83)
235	165	4/6	99	23	2
242	163	4/7	102	22	3
269	165	4/8	106	23	2
273	170	4/9	106	14	3
276	176	4/10	103	20	3
271	186	4/11	104	11	3
251	178	4/12	107	12	2
257	170	4/13	108	25	3

CORRECTION

Expansion of the 20 Meter Phone Band for U.S. amateurs becomes effective May 22, 1983, at 0001 UTC. Segments are as follows:

14150-14175 KHz, Extra Class
14175-14225 KHz, Advanced and Extra
14225-14350 KHz, General/Advanced/Extra

Credit for the VKØAN photos in Issue 185 was omitted; thanks to W5GAI for the photos.

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(German Expedition)

The South China Sea, from China's Hunan peninsula in the north to the Western coast of Indonesia, is littered with hundreds of coral reefs and sandbars. The two main island groups, the Paracels and Spratlys, are claimed by China and Viet Nam, respectively. Both groups have been hotly contested over the years, and at least some islands in the South China Sea are claimed by Taiwan, Indonesia, the Philippines, China, and Viet Nam. The importance of these islands results from their strategic military locations and from the possibility of undersea oil near them. The New York Times reports that the Atlantic Richfield Oil Company, among others, has begun exploratory drilling in the sea between China's Hunan peninsula and the Paracels Islands. The center of the Spratly group is a mere 280 miles E of Camranh Bay, Viet Nam, and 775 miles NE of Singapore. The Paracels are 225 miles east of Da Nang and only 150 miles SE of China's Hunan peninsula.

Viet Nam, supported by the U.S.S.R., has made occupation of the Spratlys a linchpin of their attempted territorial control of all of Southeast Asia. Viet Nam currently virtually controls Cambodia, has influence in Laos, and is even threatening Thailand on their border. All this with aid from the U.S.S.R., who, many believe, has the long-range goal of encircling China on all sides. Thus, China's interest in controlling the Paracels becomes apparent. The Chinese have claimed to be controlling some of the Spratlys, but they admit Viet Nam's presence there.

In April, 1979, K1MM, K4SMX, and others made the last amateur radio expedition to the Spratlys. After encountering hostile forces at Amboyna Cay, they reconnoitered on the mainland and returned for about a day of operation from uninhabited Barque Canada Reef. One well-known amateur, who had ventured to the Spratlys while stationed in Southeast Asia in the early 70's, was asked to go on the 1979 expedition, but he refused.

Speculation is rampant as to why, in the face of history and warnings from many quarters, the German team attempted an operation from the Spratlys at this time. Another question which should be answered is why anyone would fire at a sailboat. Finally, someone obviously knows what has happened to the boat and its occupants. West Germany does have diplomatic relations with Hanoi, and the answers should be forthcoming.

TDXB is grateful to amateurs in five countries, the U.S. Department of State, and the German Embassy in Washington for assistance in the preparation of this article. Background information came from the New York Times (Feb 9, 1983), the American Spectator (April, 1983), and from a State Department memorandum published in TDXB (Sept 25, 1979).

YASME REPORT

Amman, Jordan, April 5, 1983

"We have completed out JY8KG operation, having made 8500 contacts in 131 DXCC countries. This also completes our half-year of operations in East Africa and the Middle East, and we are now returning to the USA to attend the International DX Convention in Visalia California Apr 22-24. In the past six months we have made approximately 50,000 contacts as J20DU, G5ACI/AA, W6KG/A4, W6KG/A7, HZ1AB, 9K2QL, and JY8KG.

"We visited all the Arab countries except Iraq. Without exception, the top communication officials in the Arab countries have an understanding of amateur radio and are favorable toward it. When amateur radio operations are not permitted it is usually due to objections on the part of the security officials. If, and when, fighting and political tensions diminish, we can expect more amateur radio.

"In Jordan, due to the efforts of JY1, King Hussein I, and a group of dedicated radio amateurs in Jordan, there is a very active Royal Jordanian Radio Amateur Society. They have a beautiful clubhouse and a first-class amateur station. Qualified visiting amateurs may apply for permission to operate the club station.

"We will resume our travels later this year."

-- W6KG/W6QL

BRIEFLY NOTED: We did not publish the review of the TS-930 by K2VV, because only four or five of you asked for it. You can probably get a copy by writing to K2VV directly. The review in question is very negative. We have been hearing that the TS-930 has serious spurious emission problems caused by its synthesizer.

SP9JPA said Apr 11 that about a hundred Poles are back on the air from both club and private stations, and they're hoping for more soon.

I2JR, who lived in Baghdad for a couple of years, reports on Y1BGD: it is the only officially authorized station in Iraq at this time, and they have recently got permission to operate 10, 15, 40, and 80 Meters, in addition to 20. Operator Magid tries to work 15 Meters around 0600Z. They say they don't want a QSL manager as none is needed...POB 5864 is the "official" preferred box for QSLs.

DF8MP/XZ, who's still active from the Embassy in Rangoon (but doesn't count for DXCC) is said to be involved in the negotiations with Viet Nam concerning the German Spratly team.

BANDPASS: Call/Frequency/UTC (plus West, Central, East Coast report)/Date

AP2SQ 14201 13C 9	JY9RC 14215 23C 6	VR6KY 21345 00E 6	7P8CL 14205 14W 3
A22BW 28575 17E 3	J39BS 7027 02E 2	VR6KY 21305 19C 11	7Q7LW 21355 18C 2
A35JL 21260 00E 7	KC4AAA 14217 01E 9	VS5HG 14222 15W 2	7X2LS 21355 18E 9
A71BJ 7003 00E 13	KC6IN 14211 13C 11	VU2BK 7002 23E 6	7X4AN 7005 23E 12
CO2FC 7009 23E 5	(E. Carol)	VU2LE 14214 12E 7	8Q7AZ 14210 13C 6
C21RK 14219 13E 13	KØTT/	V2AR 14035 12E 7	8Q7AV 14213 12E 7
NØZO/	KHØ 7008 14W 5	V2AR 21022 13E 9	8Q7AZ 14207 12E 10
DU2 7003 13C 3	KG4DX 21344 23C 4	W6YB/	8Q7AV 14206 12C 12
DU7RLC 14206 14C 10	KG4AH 14024 00E 8	V9 21026 16E 3	9K2BE 28509 15C 8
DU9RG 14209 12E 11	M1C 21028 12E 9	XT2AW 14026 23C 4	9L2FD 21360 17E 9
EA6BO 21027 14E 9	OX5JM 14013 16W 4	YBØPG 14208 12E 6	9M2BB 14206 14W 3
EC8FG 21061 12E 4	OX3UD 14042 11E 5	YI1BGD 14204 18C 11	9M2AX 21024 17E 3
EA8QE 14057 00E 6	OX5JM 14025 12E 6	ZB2GR 21355 19E 9	9V1TS 14263 05C 2
EA8ABV 14030 01E 9	OY2J 14016 11E 5	ZB2EO 7005 21E 12	9V1TL 14225 16W 3
EA9JG 21015 15E 9	PZ9AC 14207 01C 2	ZD7WT 7005 23E 6	9V1VP 14016 15W 4
EL2AP 21363 17E 9	PZ1DV 7002 23E 12	2D7BW 14002 23C 6	
FB8WI 14017 13E 9	N5RM/	ZD7BW 21344 18E 9	
FB8WI 14021 13E 10	SU 21030 16C 9	ZK1CG 14210 06E 3	
FB8WI 14017 13C 12	TR8DR 14024 01E 9	ZS3KC 21314 17E 3	
FB8ZQ 7003 01E 10	TR8DR 14027 23W 10	ZLØAGS 14205 12E 7	
FB8ZQ 7003 01E 11	TR8DR 21018 22E 10	Z21AI 21328 19E 9	
FB8ZQ 14209 13E 13	TR8DR 7005 03E 13	3B8FG 14024 12E 6	
FK8KAA 14027 04W 5	TU2LV 14215 23C 7	3B8FK 21020 14E 9	
FK8DY 14015 05E 5	T3ØCJ 21295 00E 5	3B9DA 14208 13C 7	
FM7KA 14028 12E 4	UK1PGO 14217 14W 2	3B9DA 14208 12E 11	
FM7CT 21017 14E 9	UK2FBR 14026 11E 5	3V8AA 21031 17E 9	
FRØFLO 14216 12C 7	UAØYAD 14067 00E 5	4K1F 7004 04E 6	
FY7BW 7001 21E 12	UA9ULO 7004 11E 9	4K1F 7005 02E 7	
GU5EOO 21287 15E 2	UH8EAA 7005 22E 11	4S7EA 14210 12E 11	
HC2HM 7006 02E 7	UI8ADF 14035 02W 4	4S7EA 14209 12C 12	
HD8GI 21344 23C 4	UI8LXD 14050 01C 5	5H3BH 28610 14C 6	
HI3PC 21019 22E 8	UI8OK 14046 17W 6	5N6MAZ 21406 17E 9	
HKØBKX 14027 13E 5	UJ8JKY 14026 18W 6	KC7UU/	
HZ1AB 21286 16E 10	UJ8SAD 14207 12C 7	5N6 14027 03E 10	
JAØSWT/	UL7GAP 14045 01E 9	5T5AP 21344 00C 1	
JD1 7010 15W 7	UM8MWW 14010 02E 7	5T5TO 7005 23E 8	
JT1BN 14045 15W 4	UM8MAQ 14050 01E 9	5Z4CQ 21027 19C 2	
JT1AO 14025 13E 9	VK6OH 7007 23E 8	5Z4MX 14020 13E 9	
JWØA 14024 14C 10	VK9NS 14219 07E 3	6W8DS 28600 17E 3	
JX6RE 14025 22C 3	VQ9CI 14205 12E 11	6W8HL 21287 18E 9	

Mail reports to
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MATTEL ENTERS HAM RADIO MARKET

In response to anticipated demand from a new generation of amateur radio operators entering the hobby via a "no-code" exam, Mattel has introduced its first amateur radio transceiver. Representing a radical departure from traditional designs, the new transceiver features SSB (no CW), resembles a modified "Speak 'n Spell," and carries the designation "E.T. Phone Home." The E.T. transceiver comes complete with a special "power-mike" which resembles a small E.T. doll with a push-to-talk arm. The microphone element can be replaced by unscrewing the doll's head and inserting a replacement plug-in mic element.

Mattel plans a complete line of accessories to complement the E.T. transceiver, including a triband antenna resembling a giant umbrella, and the "E.T. Gets Through for Sure" kilowatt amplifier.

Mattel's plans were reportedly announced at an April 1 news conference. The ARRL technical staff was unavailable for comment due to involvement with the product review of a new keyer for this month's QST.

(TNX Nat'l Capitol DXA newsletter)



"Doc," ZF1MA
(this is where N6RJ/ZF2FL contests from)

CALENDAR

Chatham	ZL1AMO/C gone now
China	No BY1PK/BY8AA reports since Mar 30
Spratly	Missing...Issue 186
Trindade	PY1EFM/PY0T reports absent; I 180, 181
YASME	Finished; I 186
Crozet	FB8WI still active 20 M CW
Eg Guinea	No sign of 3C1 by F6BBJ
W Kiribati	No sign of T30CX by VK3AWN (delayed in Tahiti)
Virgin Is	AD8J/KP2 Apr 17-24
San Marino	M1 changes to T70 Apr 20
Convention	In'tl DX, Visalia CA, Apr 22-24
Hamvention	Dayton, Apr 29-May 1; I 184
Ogasawara	By KC2HQ, JR1YGP, last of April
Macao	CR9T by WA4IKZ May 2-8
W6AM	Rhombic Farm Day June 12
20 Meters	Phone Band Expansion (U.S.) May 22: Issue 186

CONTRIBUTORS

NCDXA Bulletin, I2JR, K1SA, KA1BU, YASME, K1ZZ, K1XA, KM9J, KA3R, XE1NI, N6RJ, W0JRN, WD5AAM, AB8K, W4VQ, KB8KW, K4CEF, K4BAI, W7YF, W3HHG, AK3F, N4DX, K8EM, K6IR, W0EAN, WB8ZRL, K1NH, W1NH, W7LR, K1XM, KB1BZ,

RSGB DX News Sheet says F6BBJ visited 3C1 and made application for a license; he returns to Gabon Apr 18 and hopes for Eg Guinea shortly thereafter.

BV2A sometimes in "Family Hour" 21345/0000Z Wed/Sat.

NOTICE: Next week's issue will be mailed one day earlier than normal, as the editor will be traveling the weekend of Apr 22-24. Please try to phone in info and reports on Tuesday, April 20.

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